In The Claims

1. (Currently amended) A ball screw comprising a screw shaft having a thread groove in the outer periphery thereof, a nut having a thread groove in the inner periphery thereof opposed to said screw shaft, and a plurality of balls disposed in a rolling way defined between said thread groove in said screw shaft and said thread groove in said nut, wherein a fitting surface engaging a support member with a direct contact for supporting said nut fitted therein is formed on the outer peripheral surface of the nut in the axial middle region of said rolling way and non-fitting surfaces that do not contact said support member are formed on the outer peripheral surface of the nut on the opposite axial sides of said rolling way, wherein the axial middle region includes a center point of the nut, wherein the fitting surface and the non-fitting surfaces of the nut are smoothly joined as a smooth convex surface.

2. (original) A ball screw as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said nut has a substantially cylindrical shape, and the nut is smaller in outer diameter at the opposite axial sides formed with said non-fitting surfaces than at the axial middle thereof.

3. (original) A ball screw as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the outer peripheral surface of the nut in the opposite axial sides is gradually reduced toward the axial ends of the nut.

4. (original) A ball screw as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said non-fitting surfaces extend over a distance of at least one lead axially inward from the opposite axial ends of said rolling way.

5. (currently amended) A wheel steering device having a ball screw comprising a screw shaft portion formed as a portion of a steering shaft for steering a wheel and having a thread groove formed therein, a nut having a thread groove in the inner periphery thereof opposed to the screw shaft portion and rotated by a motor, and a plurality of balls disposed in a rolling way

defined between said screw shaft portion and said nut,

wherein a fitting surface engaging a support member with a direct contact for supporting said nut fitted therein is formed on the outer peripheral surface of the nut in the axial middle region of said rolling way and non-fitting surfaces that do not contact said support member are formed on the outer peripheral surface of the nut on the opposite axial sides of said rolling way, wherein the axial middle region includes a center point of the nut, wherein the fitting surface and the non-fitting surfaces of the nut are smoothly joined as a smooth convex surface.

6. (original) A wheel steering device as set forth in Claim 5, wherein said nut has a substantially cylindrical shape, and the nut is smaller in outer diameter at the opposite axial sides formed with said non-fitting surfaces than at the axial middle thereof.

7. (original) A wheel steering device as set forth in Claim 5, wherein the outer peripheral surface of the nut in the opposite axial sides is gradually reduced toward the axial ends of the nut.

8. (original) A wheel steering device as set forth in Claim 5, wherein said non-fitting surfaces extend over a distance of at least one lead axially inward from the opposite axial ends of said rolling way.

9. (original) A wheel steering device as set for the in Claim 5, wherein said nut is fitted, with a tight fit, in a rotating member that rotates said nut by the motor.

10. (previously added) A ball screw as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the fitting surface is tightly-fitting the support member supporting said nut fitted therein.

11. (previously added) A wheel steering device as set forth in Claim 5, wherein the fitting surface is tightly-fitting the support member supporting said nut fitted therein.